

Harvest Season Safety

During harvest season, motorists should expect to see slow-moving farm equipment on Hoosier roadways from Indiana's more than 58,000 farms. Farmers, like many other people on the road, are going to or from work, and in many instances will be in large vehicles that moves at slow speeds. The following tips and guidelines can help to keep travelers safe while sharing the road with famers during harvest season

Be Alert

Staying alert while on the roads should be common practice in any driving situation, but it is especially important when sharing roadways with large, slow-moving vehicles. Below are tips on how to keep alert and aware while behind the wheel:

- Avoid texting and talking on the phone while driving. Electronic devices can become particularly dangerous distractions while behind the wheel.
- Watch for wide vehicles, especially when approaching curves and hills in the road.
- Look for a reflective red triangle on the back of any farm equipment on the road. This symbol indicates a slow-moving vehicle, one that travels under 25 mph.

Be Patient

Being patient is a must. When sharing the road with large farm equipment, a trip to or from work can take longer than expected, especially if driving down a two-lane roadway.

- Most farm equipment moves at speeds under 25 miles an hour. Leaving home 10 minutes early during harvest season can help eliminate any potential delays during the commute.
- Most farmers will pull over when able to allow vehicles to pass, but it may take time for them to get to a safe place to do so.
- Only pass large, slow-moving farm equipment when in an area that allows for passing. Double yellow lines on a roadway indicate an area in which passing is not permitted.
- Do not attempt to pass when within 100 feet of any intersection, railroad crossing, bridge or tunnel.

Be Responsible

Responsible behavior behind the wheel can mean the difference between a safe commute and one that leads to an accident. Obeying speed limits and giving other vehicles the space they need can help to prevent potential collisions.

- It only takes five seconds for a motorist driving 55 mph to close a gap the length of a football field when approaching a tractor moving at 15 mph.
- Look for hand signals before attempting to pass the vehicle. The size of farm equipment often dictates the necessity for wide turns, both to the left and the right. Just because a tractor veers right does not mean the operator is pulling over to allow someone to pass.
- Avoid tailgating, as some farm equipment might have to make sudden stops along the road.



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